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ABSTRACT

The roles of men and women in society are changing as a result of an increasing number of women entering the labor force. The dual-employed pattern has become the norm in this society and projections indicate that it will continue to increase in proportion to other lifestyles. This study investigated the relationship between social support networks and dual-worker families. Subjects (N=38) represented 19 married couples who had at least one child living with them, and both husband and wife held full-time jobs outside their home. Men and women were approximately the same age, ranging from 28 to 60 years, with an average age of 40 years. The subjects were drawn from a potential vocational population which included administrators, educators, office staff, warehouse workers, and custodial staff, plus the spouse of each. Educational level, annual family and personal incomes, and hours per week and weeks per year of employment were examined. The primary hypotheses in the study focused on the assumption that greater availability of social support would yield greater satisfaction with spousal role sharing. The results for the men fell in the predicted direction, though not at a significant level. For wives and couples the direction of the findings relating social support and spousal role sharing was opposite to that which was hypothesized. Though the results did not reach statistically significant levels, the direction indicated that the greater the availability of social support, the less satisfaction with spousal role sharing. Wives in the dual-worker families experienced greater availability of social support than did husbands. (ABL)

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SOCIAL SUPPORT
IN RELATION TO SPOUSAL ROLE SHARING
IN DUAL-WORKER FAMILIES

A Plan B Paper
Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of the University of Minnesota

by
Bonnie J. Harris

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The traditional roles of men as breadwinners and women as homemakers are giving way to new roles in families. More and more women are becoming employed and thereby sharing the provider role. As a result, men face increasing demands to assume greater responsibility for family roles. While some couples experience mutual satisfaction from the way they assume their new roles, others feel on the horns of a dilemma much of the time. This study will consider how satisfied husbands and wives are with the way they share family and work roles. Specific attention will be given to the influence of the couple's social support network on their perceived sense of well-being.

Need for this Study

The roles of men and women in society are changing as a result of increasing numbers of women entering the labor force (Sekaran, 1983). Married women, in particular, are not only going to work but are working more consistently than ever before (Berman, Sacks & Lief, 1975). As a consequence of the employment of both husband and wife,

a new lifestyle pattern has been emerging, that of the dual-employed.

Dual-Worker Families

Several authors have attempted to define the dual-employed lifestyle by differentiating between the dual-career and the dual-worker patterns as they apply to couples and families. Rapoport & Rapoport (1969) define the dual-career couple as both spouses having "jobs which require a high degree of commitment and which have a continuous developmental character" (p. 58). The dual-worker couple is simply defined as both spouses holding paid jobs. Dual-career families are those in which both husband and wife pursue careers and at the same time establish a family life with at least one child (Rapoport, Rapoport & Bumstead, 1978). Sekaran (1983), on the other hand, defined the dual-career family as one where both spouses had full-time jobs outside of their home (professional and non-professional).

The conclusion of Rapoport & Rapoport (1971) is that the concept of dual-career family is an imprecise one, and that it covers a constellation of family types rather than representing a single homogeneous or uniform type. For the purpose of this study, dual-worker family is defined as

both husband and wife holding full-time jobs outside their home (professional and non-professional) and at the same time establishing a family life with at least one child in the home.

The incidence of dual-career marriages (both spouses in professional jobs) rose at a steady rate of seven percent per year during the 1970s so that by 1979 there were three million dual-career marriages in the United States (Rice, 1979). The dual-worker pattern increased, as well, to become ten times more prevalent than the dual-career pattern. As a result, the dual-employed pattern (i.e., including dual-career and dual-worker patterns) is currently the modal one for at least a portion of every family's life cycle (Parker, Peltier & Wolleat, 1981).

As of 1978, a majority (55%) of married women under age 54 (living with their husbands) were employed (Bernard, 1981). By 1978, only six percent of American families fit the traditional model of two parents with husband working and wife caring for children (Nadelson & Nadelson, 1980). Thus, traditional families are the exception in our society while dual-employed families have become the norm. Therefore, researchers in the 1970s increasingly shifted their focus to the dual-employed lifestyle - a focus that remains viable today given the continued growth of this pattern. Employment experts predict that by 1990 the

percentage of married women in the labor force will grow to 67% (Bernard, 1981).

The accelerated pace of social change from traditional to dual-employed creates both costs and benefits for the families involved. The pressures of handling multiple roles by married working couples, and especially by the women in such families, has been well documented (Darley, 1976; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979). There is considerable support for the idea that there are benefits for mothers, children, and families when the mother works, even if it is out of necessity rather than desire (Howell, 1973). As men and women are expected in the future to continue combining roles of spouse, parent, and employee, counseling psychologists need to be prepared to assist them in optimally handling their roles (Brodie, 1981). For continued improvement of the quality of life, methods must be developed for increasing the benefits while reducing the costs of the dual-employed lifestyle.

Social-Support Networks

Sekaran (1983) suggested that "Both spouses might well look for varying degrees of satisfaction from the other facets of their life (beyond work and family) - facets which would also be important contributors to the quality of life

that they experience" (p. 162). A couple's social support network is one such facet. Indeed, a central premise underlying both the philosophy and practice of psychology is a belief that individual adjustment is linked to the character of the social environment that encompasses the individual's functioning (Kelly, Snowden & Munoz, 1977). Campbell (1976) notes that progress in understanding well-being requires exploration of social networks and support.

A social support network is usually defined as the existence or availability of people on whom we can rely, people who let us know that they care about, value, and love us (Sarason, Levine, Basham & Sarason, 1983). Social support networks are positively correlated with enhanced psychological well-being (Froland, Brodsky, Olson & Stewart, 1979; Holahan & Moos, 1982; Tolsdorf, 1976) and reduced stress (Cassell, 1974; Cobb, 1976).

Relationship Between Social Support and Dual Workers

While research has shown that there is a variety of ways in which marital dyads and social networks are connected (Milardo, Johnson & Huston, 1983), little has been reported on the relationship between social support networks and the dual-employed lifestyle. Mitchell & Trickett (1980)

state, "Although it seems clear that social networks are important aspects of one's life...whom they affect in what way are questions still largely unanswered....One of the most consistent findings in this as yet small literature is that persons lacking reciprocal [social support] relationships are less likely to experience satisfaction" (pp. 37, 39). Nadelson et al. (1980) point to the strains and stresses resulting from the interface between dual-employed couples and their social support networks. Wives continue to find less social support for their career commitments than do their husbands. Likewise, husbands are not socially supported in homemaking activities which continue to be seen as the wife's domain. Thus, if the non-traditional pattern is taken, neither partner is adequately supported in both career and home roles.

In this period of history, when men and women are changing their role conceptions more rapidly than new social structures are evolving to provide the necessary supports, it is to be expected that there will be conflicts and difficulties to deal with, and that flexibility will be required both of individuals and of their social environments, including the helping professions. Richardson (1981) notes research data indicating that conflict is deleterious to general well-being and specific role satisfactions. Richardson points out that, so far, those

individual, role, and social variables that might mediate the presumed impact of conflict on psychological adjustment have not been studied in detail. "In general, studies of couples and social networks have been restricted to (a) global assessments of networks without specifically identifying the particular members, (b) broad ratings of the degree of social affiliation with general categories of significant others, (c) the target person's perceptions of the attitudes or beliefs of network members, and (d) retrospective accounts of social interaction, role expectations, or network interference and approval" (Milardo et al., 1983, p. 964).

The increasing number of clients seeking to maintain a dual-employed lifestyle has increased the need for counselors to educate themselves to the unique set of concerns, needs, and characteristics particular to dual-worker partners, their families, and the social support networks in which they are embedded (Parker et al., 1981). Milardo et al. (1983) emphasize that the relationship between dyads and networks warrants further study. They note, "An understanding of the fundamental interdependencies of couples and social networks may be advanced further by identifying other important qualities of networks as they covary with change in the pair relationship" (p. 975).

Purpose of this Study

The dual-employed pattern has become the norm in our society, and projections indicate it will continue to increase in proportion to other lifestyles. While the dual-worker pattern yields benefits, it creates conflicts, as well, for the families involved. Thus, for continued improvement of the quality of life, counselors and educators must learn what factors increase the benefits while reducing the costs of the dual-worker lifestyle. One such factor may be social support. Consistently, social support has been shown to enhance the well-being of individuals. Yet little is known about social support as it pertains to dual-worker families. It is significant, therefore, that this research into marital dyads and social networks be conducted.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between social support networks and dual-worker families. Some questions to be answered are: How does social support influence the sense of well-being experienced by spouses? How satisfied are employed couples with the way they fulfill their roles? As the availability of social support increases, do husbands and wives in dual-worker families experience greater satisfaction with the way they share their family and work responsibilities?

Statement of the Problem

This study seeks to determine the impact of the availability of social support on the role satisfaction of the spouses in dual-worker families. The subjects of this study fit the dual-worker definition described herein. They are married couples who have at least one child living with them, and both husband and wife hold full-time jobs outside their home (professional and non-professional).

Organization of this Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One is an Introduction of the study. It contains an examination of the need for a study relating marital dyads and social support networks, and states the purpose of this study which is to investigate the relationship between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing in dual-worker families.

Chapter Two is a Review of the Literature relevant to the dual-employed lifestyle and social support networks. It focuses on some of the key issues affecting the dual-employed, with particular emphasis given to role-sharing and social support systems. Chapter Three

contains the Methodology employed in this study, including descriptions of the sample selection process, research instruments used, and the design of the study.

An Analysis of the Data is presented in Chapter Four which includes the sample response, demographic characteristics, and a statistical analysis of the hypotheses. The Discussion in Chapter Five sets forth a summary of the data and the research findings, notes limitations and conclusions regarding the study, and includes recommendations and implications for further research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Researchers have attempted to define and apply the concepts of dual-worker family, spousal role sharing, and social support network to many varying circumstances. It is apparent from a review of the literature that each of these concepts is imprecise and covers a constellation of characteristics rather than representing uniform or homogeneous attributes. Therefore, a major purpose in this chapter is to more clearly define the concepts as they are used in this study, as well as to survey the relevant literature.

Dual-Worker Families

Dual-career, dual-worker, dual-earner, and dual-job are all terms which are typically applied to variations of the concept of both partners in a marital dyad being employed. Distinctions are made "between couples in which both have major career goals outside of their family roles, and those couples in which one has major career goals and one has a job, or in which both are simply employed" (Hester & Dickerson, 1982, p. 515).

Van Dusen and Sheldon (1976) define dual career as "the combination and juxtaposition of parental and occupational responsibilities" (p. 115). Researchers variously define dual-career families as:

- "both husband and wife have continuous and self-fulfilling extra-domestic work roles as well as meaningful and involving family roles" (Hunt & Hunt, 1982, p. 499).
- both spouses have a full-time occupation outside the home which they intend to continue to pursue (Sekaran, 1983).
- "both heads of household pursue careers (i.e., jobs which are highly salient personally, have a developmental sequence, and require a high degree of commitment) and at the same time maintain a family life together" (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978, p. 387).
- both partners work outside the home and are committed to the continuity of their work, i.e., the work is important for personal development as well as for household income (Butler & Paisley, 1980).

Family households in which both spouses are gainfully employed outside the home but not necessarily committing themselves to a long-term, developmental progression of occupational pursuits are defined as dual-worker families

(Parker et al., 1981; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978), dual-earner families (Keith and Schafer, 1984), and dual-job families (Butler & Paisley, 1980). Sekaran (1983) points out that spouses with jobs that do not necessarily demand a high degree of commitment represent the majority of the American dual-income families today.

For the purpose of this study, dual-worker family is defined as both husband and wife holding full-time jobs outside their home (professional and non-professional) and at the same time establishing a family life with at least one child living in the home. This describes the families involved in the present study.

Role Sharing

The dual-worker lifestyle emerged primarily during the 1970s. Key contributing factors were economic pressures and the developing career goals of women. Married women, in particular, are now working more consistently than ever before (Berman et al., 1975). Hester and Dickerson (1982) point to a combination of the rising aspirations of women; wider educational and employment opportunities; and current economic conditions in projecting an ever-increasing number of dual-career couples and families in the 1980s. Therefore, educators and counselors need to become aware of

the unique set of concerns, needs, and characteristics particular to this lifestyle (Parker et al., 1981).

Husbands and wives have reported economic, familial, marital and personal benefits from the dual-worker lifestyle (Burke & Weir, 1976; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970; Yogev, 1981). In this regard, Parker et al. (1981) noted the following:

The literature points to several benefits that dual career couples may enjoy: intellectual companionship; mutual empathy or understanding of both work and home obligations, stress, and joys; greater financial resources; feelings of self-fulfillment and contentment (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971); sharing of resources, knowledge, and ideas in work roles (Martin, Berry, & Jacobsen, 1975); equal distribution of resource and influence power in the relationship and equal opportunities for both to attain the ultimate accomplishment of the mature adult - to realize a meaningful work role and meaningful relationships (Hall & Hall, 1979). (p. 15)

As will be noted in the following sections, however, the majority of studies reveal the difficulties inherent in this pattern. The literature indicates multiple-role stress, sex-role conflict, and role inequity factors may threaten the personal satisfaction and well-being of

partners in dual-worker families. Since this study is focused on satisfaction with role sharing in the marital dyad, these factors that may threaten a sense of well-being are of particular interest.

Multiple-role Stress

Traditionally, the husband has been the major source of family economic resources (Bott, 1957). But men's incomes do not always match family needs (Piotrkowski, 1979), needs which are often based on life-style and consumption aspirations as well as on basic survival (Oppenheimer, 1979). Therefore, not only threats to economic well-being but also perceived opportunities provide a major motivation for family decision-making regarding the employment of the wife and mother. While wives' employment brings economic gain to the family, it may be accompanied by personal or relational losses, as well. Families will often sacrifice to meet the demands of employment, especially if necessary to meet economic needs, even when those sacrifices cause deterioration in family relationships (Piotrkowski, 1979). One source of deterioration is multiple-role stress. Variouslly labeled role conflict or role overload, multiple-role stress is encountered by many individuals who attempt to integrate or combine occupational and familial

roles. This typically involves competing demands on time, conflicting normative expectations attached to roles, and lack of supportive environments (Richardson, 1981).

Since the well-being and self-esteem of individuals is directly tied to the role pressures they experience (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979), dual-worker partners often encounter problems as a result of combining marital, parental, and provider roles. Sekaran (1983) found, "One of the main variables which is increasingly documented in the literature as having an influence on dual-career family member's work and family lives is the experienced stress of handling and adapting to multiple roles" (p. 162). Both husbands and wives experience the strain caused by the conflicting demands of family and work roles (Bernard, 1981; Keith & Schafer, 1984; Mortimer & London, 1982).

In a comparison of 130 men in one-job families and 135 men in families with two wage-earners, the men in dual-worker families reported more personal role conflict and also evaluated their wives' role performance as poorer (Keith & Schafer, 1984). Bernard (1981) found role strain on husbands in a dual-worker marriage results from (1) the wife's expectations and demands that the husband share the family responsibilities and tasks, and (2) the new demand being made on the male role for more intimacy, expressivity, and nurturance in the marital relationship. Husbands often

experience psychological and physical stress in learning to cope with these new role demands (Bernard, 1981).

While role overload is a key problem for the dual-worker family, it is the employed mother who is most burdened by multiple-role stress. Though employed, she remains responsible for most family work (Mortimer & London, 1983). In Pleck & Rustad's (1980) study of time use, husbands of employed wives contributed only about 13 hours of family work per week in comparison to the wives' contribution of about 28 hours. Husband's family work changes very little in response to variation in wives' roles (Pleck, 1977). Bernard (1981) found that time-use studies are going on all over the industrialized world and everywhere the same picture shows up: An image of women sharing the provider role and at the same time retaining responsibility for the household.

Sekaran (1983), in a study of 127 marital dyads, found significant differences between dual-worker wives and husbands in perceived life satisfaction and multiple-role stress. Husbands scored significantly higher in life satisfaction and wives scored significantly higher in multiple-role stress. Multiple-role stress may be felt more by employed wives than by husbands because it is the women who devote more time and energy to running the house and

attending to family and social obligations (Hall & Hall, 1979; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979). It is the uneven sharing of work and family roles that lowers the life satisfaction of women.

On the other hand, studies reviewed by Yogeve (1981) showed an egalitarian pattern evolving in which each marital partner had a significant role in both paid work and in family work. Husbands were increasing their participation and assumption of responsibility in the domestic and child care duties which usually fell exclusively on wives (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969, 1971). Szinovacz (1979) found that, "Most of the studies done in this area reveal a similar picture: wives' employment is consistently shown to increase husbands' participation in household chores and to further egalitarian roles and relationships between spouses" (p. 42). However, in a review of those studies, Szinovacz forcefully criticized the researchers' failure to establish the causal link between variables.

While more egalitarian patterns may be evolving as a result of wives' employment, a review of the literature makes it clear that, at present, multiple-role stress is not equally shared by wives and husbands in dual-worker families. Change is slow to achieve. The literature suggests a key factor in resistance to change to more

egalitarian patterns may be the marital partners' sex-role socialization.

Sex-role Conflict

The traditional model of the nuclear conjugal family was supported in the research of the 1950s and 1960s. The traditional model labels the male as the head of the household and vests him with most of the power in the marital relationship (Yogev, 1981). There exists a rather strict division of labor which is gender specific; men are the breadwinners and women are the homemakers (Bott, 1957). In the traditional model, women's employment and career goals are seen as violating the values and norms of the female role. Axelson, in 1963, found that wives' employment caused conflict and less marital happiness in the families of that era.

It appears that not a lot has changed for women or for men. Twenty years after Axelson's (1963) study, Sekaran (1983) found that women who transgress culturally determined norms by becoming more committed to their careers and less involved with their families pay the price for such behaviors in terms of experiencing more guilt and less life satisfaction. And Rice (1979) observed that men in dual-career couples are extremely resistant to sharing more

of the load around the house. Though couples share the provider role, the traditional division of labor in the home remains remarkably tenacious (Mortimer & London, 1983).

Men and women, alike, are struggling with the definition of masculine and feminine roles as they have been socialized to understand them. Men, when faced with the problem of expanding their roles or relating to a woman who has expanded hers, may struggle with considerably more conflict and confusion than the women who cross sex-role boundaries (Burke & Weir, 1976). Most men are not socialized or trained to participate in or assume responsibility for homemaking and childrearing roles. In addition, should he expand his domestic role, he may be at a disadvantage when competing with other men who do not have similar family roles (Rosen, Jerdee, & Prestwich, 1975). He may realistically perceive negative impact on his career if he devotes time and energy to domestic activities.

Many women involved in the dual-worker lifestyle today were socialized to expect adult roles of wife and mother. A woman who attempts to combine a career and a family will have to struggle against socially accepted norms (Hall & Hall, 1979), especially in the area of childrearing. Sex role sanctions remain particularly strong in the area of childrearing. The expectation is that the mother will be the primary psychological parent and the one principally

responsible for raising the child (Johnson & Johnson, 1977). Hall and Hall (1979) report that the most important determinants of how successfully couples manage seem to be their ability to share child-raising tasks and responsibilities and the extent to which both partners are able to internalize the role of the psychological parent. At present, this role task remains outside the boundary of typical sex-role socialization. Men are not prepared for the role of psychological parent and, because of their socialization, women may be unwilling to share it. In Yogev's (1981) study of 61 university faculty women with children, one woman responded, "I am not sure I want it to be equal. I want to be with the children these unequal hours, otherwise how shall I be able to feel that I am the 'Mother' of the family" (p. 868).

For wives and for husbands, there are as yet no clear-cut sex-role norms for combining work and family responsibilities (Hopkins & White, 1978). As indicated above, couples who attempt the task may expect to face the strains and insecurities of uncharted territory. For them, role inequity becomes a critical issue.

Role Inequity

Equity issues are a core concern in dual-worker families (Hall & Hall, 1979; Parker, et al., 1981; Rice,

1979). Parker et al. (1981) emphasize how crucial it is that "each partner perceives and anticipates that over time and across situations, opportunities, benefits, and constraints even out and are 'fairly' distributed between the two individuals" (p. 16). For dual-career couples, equity in family roles is related to greater marital satisfaction (Berman et al., 1975), while problems of inequity are at the core of marital maladjustment (Rice, 1979). Hall & Hall (1979) found that the most serious fights among dual-worker couples occur not in the bedroom, but in the kitchen, between couples who profess a commitment to equality but who find actually implementing it to be difficult. The issues of multiple-role stress and sex-role conflicts cited above are integral factors in role inequity issues for dual-worker families.

The traditional versus the egalitarian model of family organization is one way to further conceptualize role disparities. In the traditional model, housework and child care are women's responsibility. In the egalitarian model, "the responsibilities and performance of household tasks are shared equally by women and spouses in terms of time spent on tasks as well as the type of tasks - whether traditionally a female, male, or neutral task" (Brodie, 1981, p. 53). The egalitarian model focuses on equality.

Another concept, that of equity, warrants consideration. Rapoport & Rapoport (1975) distinguish between equality and equity in reporting that equality implies "sameness" while equity is defined as "the presence of equal opportunity plus the feeling of fairness if there is inequality of conditions" (p. 421). Equity emphasizes balancing constraints in a way that is felt to be fair even if not identical. It refers to fairness and impartiality and is considered by the Rapoportes to be preferable to equality in role sharing.

Hall & Hall (1979) concluded from their research that "what couples value most is the mutual recognition that home care is not just the woman's responsibility. This perceived sense of equity is essential even if, as in most cases, women still do more homemaking tasks than men. What leaves them feeling fairly treated is the attitude of their spouses toward sharing the responsibility" (p. 124). Thus, equity may be defined as "perceived fairness."

The concept of perceived fairness may be illustrated by Yogev's (1981) research with 61 married faculty women with children. She reported:

In spite of the big gap between husbands and wives in total time devoted to career, child care, and domestic work (29.7 hours more per week for the women), only a few women believed their husbands were not doing enough

of the housework (24.5 percent). Only a scant 13.1 percent thought that he did less than his share of child care. The majority of married women with children (59 percent) believed that their husbands were doing their share, or even more than they were supposed to do, of housework. Even more of the mothers (82.1 percent) had the same opinion regarding child care....The subjects did not expect an egalitarian pattern where husbands do half of the housework and child care chores. (p. 868)

Rice (1979), reporting on dual-career families, noted that women do more housework than their husbands, but they do not complain or even consciously feel that this is unfair. An explanation for this sense of perceived fairness in the midst of unequal circumstances requires a return to the concept of sex-role socialization. The Rapoport (1975) introduced the term "identity tension line" to describe how far individuals are able to go toward establishing their ideal new definitions of sex roles before reaching the point of discomfort, when these new behaviors threaten individual notions of self esteem.

With this in mind, Yogev (1981) concluded that it is realistic to assume that traditional role division exists because the egalitarian sharing of housework and child care goes beyond the identity tension line of today's women and

men. The husbands avoid crossing their masculine identity tension lines by resistance toward increasing their part in family work. And wives "seem to be currently undergoing a role expansion process which allows them to expand their horizons in an internal and psychological manner without abandoning traditional functions and obligations" (Yogev, 1981, p. 870). Hall & Hall (1979) observe that the tendency for the woman is to simply take on three jobs - wife, mother, and career person - in order to meet her own needs as well as society's expectations. The Rapoport (1975) observe that the traditional model of role sharing may be perceived as equitable only because of lack of awareness of the inequities involved. Lack of awareness may result in reports of satisfaction or perceived fairness even when the circumstances are as inequitable as those cited in Yogev's (1981) study.

Social Support Networks

A social support system incorporates a network of relationships that are an individual's link to essential resources (Sarason, 1976). Social network typically refers to the number, frequency, proximity, and quality of social contacts, while social support refers to the patterns of help utilization - what persons are turned to for help

and the types of help involved (Barnett & Baruch, 1978). Some theorists define the type of help quite narrowly, restricting it to mean emotional support such as intimacy and reassurance of worth (Sarason et al., 1983), i.e., resources which protect the ego from the negative effects of stressful situations (McLanahan, Wedemeyer & Adelberg, 1981).

Other theorists define social support more broadly, including such resources as direct services, guidance, and access to new information (Mitchell & Trickett, 1980). An inclusive view is held by Walker et al. (1977) who define the support network as "a set of personal contacts through which the individual maintains his [sic] social identity and receives emotional supports, material aid and services, information and new social contacts" (p. 357).

Sarason et al. (1983) conclude that regardless of how it is conceptualized, social support would seem to have two basic elements: (1) the perception that there is a sufficient number of available others to whom one can turn in times of need, and (2) a degree of satisfaction with the available support. The definition of social support used in this study comes from Mitchell & Trickett (1980) and includes both elements. The categories can be summarized in terms of the following functions: (a) emotional support;

(b) task-oriented assistance; (c) communication of expectations, evaluation, and a shared world view; and (d) access to new and diverse information and social contacts.

Social Support and Dual-Worker Families

There have been numerous studies of social support networks. Researchers have related networks to psychological adaptation (Froland et al., 1979; Mitchell & Hodson, 1984; Tolsdorf, 1976), effects of stress (Cassell, 1974; Cobb, 1976); transitions in life (Milardo et al., 1983), job performance (Miller, 1984), and help-seeking behavior (McKinlay, 1973). Pilisuk & Parks (1983) claim that for every study indicating the effects of stress on health breakdown, whether biological or psychological, there is another indicating that individuals who are part of a socially supportive network of continuing interpersonal ties achieve a measure of protection or immunity from these same disorders. The general importance of an individual's support network has been clearly established in the field of mental health. But there remains a paucity of literature relating dual-worker families and social support networks. Therefore, the literature background for the present study must be pieced together primarily from studies of individuals.

A delineation of background information for the present study is further complicated in that the research indicates a circular rather than causal relationship may exist between social support networks and the factors related to them. For example, Cassell (1974) and Cobb (1976) found that individuals with high levels of social support are less likely to show psychological maladjustment in the face of stress than are individuals with low levels of social support. Thoits (1982), on the other hand, established that much of the adverse effect of stressful events occurs through their negative impact on social support.

Social Support and Role Sharing

Social scientists have focused on what has come to be known as the "Bott hypothesis" as a foundation point when relating the variables of spousal roles and social support networks. Elizabeth Bott (1957) developed a hypothesis concerning the relationship between role segregation in married couples and the degree of interconnectedness of the couples' social network. She observed that some couples have highly segregated role relationships, while others have far lower segregation. At one extreme was a family in which the husband and wife carried out as many tasks as possible separately and independently of each other. There was a strict division of labor in the household (segregated roles,

traditional orientation). At the other extreme was a family in which husband and wife shared as many activities and spent as much time together as possible (joint roles). They stressed that husband and wife should be equals (egalitarian orientation).

From a study of 20 London couples, Bott hypothesized that the crucial mediating variable was the degree of interconnectedness of the social network in which the couple was embedded. In her terms, a couple has a close-knit social network if the persons with whom the couple interacts most frequently all know one another well. A couple has a loose-knit network if the persons with whom the couple interacts most frequently are strangers to one another.

The "Bott hypothesis" holds that the connectedness of the social network of married couples is positively associated with marital role segregation. That is, the more close-knit the social networks of the individual spouses, the more highly segregated their roles. Each spouse will get some emotional satisfaction and material helps from these external relationships and will likely demand correspondingly less of the spouse. Rigid segregation of roles will be possible because each spouse can get help from other people.

Nelson's (1966) findings supported the Bott hypothesis. He collected data on 131 working-class wives showing that

participation in tightly-knit social networks is directly related to seeking out friends and relatives rather than husbands for primary support, and inversely related to conceiving of spousal roles in companionate terms. In Nelson's study, 66 percent of the wives in loosely-knit networks thought that their husbands should be more involved in social and emotional activities. But only 41 percent of the wives in tightly-knit networks thought their husbands should be more socially, emotionally involved with them. The findings were uniform: extensive informal involvement outside the family increases the likelihood that nuclear family orientations will be traditional. Nelson concluded, "If resources outside the family exist and are drawn upon, a wife can be quite content with her family situation" (p. 671).

Krain (1977) found that social network commitment coupled with low companionate role demands on the partner may be established as early as courtship. Eighty dating and engaged couples of college age showed an absence of an increase in the desire to be intimately alone together in increasingly later stages of courtship. Nor did they gain a mutual set of friends as they advanced in dyad committedness and solidarity.

Gordon & Downing (1978), using a sample of 686 married women, determined that the structure of a person's social

network does have an effect on marital role integration but not exactly as predicted by Bott. They suggest that as the number of network members shared by the two spouses increases, so does role integration. They note, however, that a shared network may simply be another aspect of marital integration and, therefore, merely another wedge of the integration pie rather than a separate variable.

Dual-worker families may prove an exception to the Bott hypothesis. In a study of 344 middle-class, middle-aged American couples, Udry & Hall (1965) found that role segregation is not related to the interconnectedness of the social network if the wife is employed. Couples scoring low on role segregation tended to be those in which the wife was a college graduate working outside the home. The researchers assume the probable explanation for their findings is the effect of the wife's employment on the husband's participation in domestic chores.

Social Support and Psychological Well-Being

As mentioned above, several studies indicate the importance of considering social support systems in the psychological functioning of individuals. Indices of social support have characteristically been limited to exclusively quantitative measures of the number of helpers available or the number of contacts with such helpers (Holahan & Moos,

1982). Yet some investigators have suggested that the salutary role of social support may be more a function of the quality of support than of its absolute quantity (Chan, 1977; Porritt, 1979). The following researchers used qualitative measures to determine the relations between social support and psychological well-being.

Holtzman (1982) studied 71 dual-working couples in middle-class, Mexican-American families. Spouse support and network effectiveness were positively associated with life satisfaction for both parents. However, at the level of significance, differential results were obtained. Role conflict was significant in predicting life satisfaction for the female parents, while network effectiveness was a significant variable in predicting life satisfaction for the male parents. Consistent, then, with earlier findings, multiple-role stress greatly impacted the women, but not the men, in these dual-worker families, significantly lowering their life satisfaction.

Social support from network members and from spouses may be a mitigating factor in the level of distress experienced by employed women. Married, professional women with pre-school children associated network social support with lower role conflict and with greater coping effectiveness (Elman, 1981). In another study, married, working women with children in the home reported on role

conflict between the demands of their roles as wife, mother, and worker. Subjects perceiving higher levels of emotional support from their husbands reported less role conflict than those perceiving low levels of support (Oates, 1981).

The role of social support in marital satisfaction was studied by Dickson-Markham (1983). Results indicated that the quality of self-disclosure with friendships outside the marriage was significantly predictive of marital satisfaction. Nelson (1966) asserts that marital satisfaction is a consequence of the interaction between support networks and family orientations (traditional versus egalitarian) rather than a separate effect. The differences in degree of segregation of conjugal roles among the research families could not be attributed to differences in phase of development (newly married, adolescents, etc.), nor in terms of social class, nor in the type of local area in which the family lived. Nelson noted that satisfaction with family life is most frequently expressed when there is an effective network providing adequate support.

Sources of Social Support

Rapoport & Rapoport (1978) emphasize the importance of external support structures for dual-worker couples. They believe family members cannot get all of their emotional and physical support needs met within the family. Sources of

both external and internal social support are typically categorized as (a) spouse, (b) family, (c) kin, (d) friends, (e) work colleagues, and (f) community resources. External and internal sources of social support were compared in a study with subjects who were both married and employed, working in lower middle- or working-class jobs. Fifteen sources of satisfaction were divided into 3 factors that were interpreted as (1) instrumental reward, (2) emotional support, and (3) shared interests. The results indicated women derive more satisfaction from friends and family while men get more satisfaction from spouses and work superiors (Argyle & Furnham, 1983).

The central role of wives as social support for husbands was noted by Schlossberg (1980), as well. Her review of the literature indicated that the death of a spouse may be more traumatic for men than for women because men are less likely to have formed - or be able to form - close relationships with other people. Women, on the other hand, are more likely to be cited as confidants and to have confidant ties with kin than are men (Hoyt & Babchuk, 1983).

Summary

A review of the literature reveals dual-income families have become the norm in our society. Spouses with jobs that

do not necessarily demand a high degree of commitment, i.e., dual-worker families, represent the majority of the dual-income patterns. Both benefits and costs accrue to the spouses in dual-worker families. Economic, marital, and personal gains may be offset by losses in the form of multiple-role stress, sex-role conflict, and role inequity factors. Multiple-role stress takes a greater toll on the women than on the men. Though employed, women remain responsible for most of the family work. Therefore, women score significantly lower than men on life satisfaction scales.

Traditional sex-role socialization fails to prepare men for family-role responsibility and leaves women feeling guilty when they transgress culturally determined norms. Husbands and wives, alike, often have difficulty crossing their identity tension lines. Men resist assuming family roles and women resist sharing those roles (e.g., feel their role as mother may be threatened if men share with them the role of psychological parent). In the midst of this resistance to change, however, there remains a clear concern around role inequity.

The role equality of the egalitarian family orientation appears not to be the solution to the traditional orientation of role segregation. Role equity may be a more practical goal. Equity emphasizes equal opportunity plus

the feeling of fairness in the midst of unequal conditions. Holding to a rationale of perceived fairness allows spouses to evolve toward more equitable role sharing without crossing their identity tension lines.

Social support networks clearly enhance the well-being of individuals. The question remains, however, whether the factors influencing the well-being of individuals and marital dyads will generalize to the spouses in dual-worker families. For example, numerous studies support the Bott hypothesis until it is applied to the dual-worker lifestyle. The paucity of literature relating social support and dual-worker families points to the necessity of further study in this area.

Indices of role sharing and social support characteristically have been limited to quantitative measures of time use and helpers available. These quantitative measures are associated with issues of equality. Investigators are now suggesting equity is preferable to equality in role sharing and that the salutary role of social support may be more a function of the quality of support than of its quantity. Thus, in order to be consistent with the new directions in research, new studies need to use qualitative measures to access role equity and social support variables.

The present study is conceptually unique as it relates to both aspects of research need: (1) social support is studied as it relates specifically to the members of dual-worker families, and (2) spousal roles and social support are addressed in qualitative terms.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the relationship between (a) the availability of social support and (b) satisfaction with spousal role-sharing in dual-worker families.

Sample Selection

Dual-worker families are the population of interest in this study. The sample of subjects was collected in the Minneapolis metropolitan area. To be included in the sample, both spouses had to have been working a minimum of 35 hours per week for nine of the last 12 months, currently have at least one child living in their home, and both spouses in agreement to participate. It was determined that the dual-worker pattern could be better understood by studying the similarities and differences of family members who share the same family situation. The decision was made to require that both spouses work 35 or more hours per week to be eligible for the study to tighten up the focus regarding equitable role sharing on the domestic front.

It was decided to include a broad spectrum of professional and non-professional men and women in the

study. Since fifty couples were desired for this research, business organizations and educational institutions seemed ideal places to look for such a sample base. The researcher contacted two large, national business corporations, each at their home-office site, and also the three campuses of a county vocational-technical educational institution. The approximate number of employees per organization was 250, 550, and 450, respectively. All five personnel directors (i.e., one from each of the two corporations, and one from each of the three campuses) intensively examined the research proposal and the instruments to be used in the study. After discussion and negotiation, all five reported back to the researcher allowing their organization's participation in the survey.

The selection of the institutions was based on the idea that a fairly broad spectrum of professional and non-professional men and women should be represented in the study to meet the definition of dual-worker families described herein. The potential vocational population from which the sample was drawn included top administrative personnel, educators, office staff, warehouse workers, and custodial staff plus the spouse of each, in whatever occupation the latter might be employed. No students from the educational institution were invited to participate in the study.

Design, Procedures, and Limitations

Design

The three instruments used in this research design were compiled into a Research Questionnaire. All the instruments could be self-administered. The estimated time to complete the Research Questionnaire was 15 minutes. The research design is a correlational study of the interrelationship between social support and spousal role sharing.

The independent variable in this design is the availability of social support. The dependent variable is satisfaction with the way family and work roles are shared by the spouses in dual-worker families.

Sampling Procedures

Subjects for this study were solicited in a number of ways. Much discussion and negotiation was required to meet the unique concerns of each organization for assuring employees' freedom, anonymity, and confidentiality, and for insuring that employees would not spend company time on the study. Organization A agreed to solicit subjects by posting a letter of invitation on the bulletin board in the company cafeteria and displaying a stack of consent forms nearby (see Appendix A for copies of the letter and consent form).

Organization B published a small advertisement in the company newsletter indicating the letter of invitation and consent forms would be available on a table in the personnel office. Organization C placed a letter of invitation, with consent form attached, in the postal boxes of employees. Only two organizations were contacted in the first phase of data-gathering. Due to an insufficient number of respondents, the third organization was approached by the researcher. Incentives for organizations and couples to participate included the offering of research summaries upon completion of the study.

Testing Procedures

Each respondent couple was mailed a packet containing a cover letter, two Research Questionnaires, and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope (see Appendices C, D, and E for copies of the cover letter and the Research Questionnaire). The cover letter instructed the subjects to respond independently, i.e., without discussing the survey until each spouse had answered all the questions in writing. The cover letter also emphasized the importance of taking time to complete the survey thoughtfully and then returning it to the researcher in the accompanying envelope. Two weeks after the initial mailing a follow-up letter (see

Appendix A) was mailed to couples who had not yet returned the research instrument. Again, self-addressed, stamped envelopes were included in the mailing to encourage an increase in the rate of participation. A research code known only to the investigator was used to follow-up unreturned materials. All research questionnaires were identified by code numbers rather than by the subjects' names in order to insure confidentiality. An effort was made to assure the respondents that confidentiality would be maintained in the collecting, processing, and reporting of the research data.

Limitations

As with most investigations of this nature, many factors remain uncontrolled. Limitations of this study resulted from the selection procedure and from the test administration procedure. None of the organizations would allow the researcher to be on the premises for the purpose of soliciting their employees. Therefore, of necessity, the solicitation was conducted in a passive manner. The potential response depended entirely on the initiative of the employees of Organization A to read the cafeteria bulletin board, of Organization B to read the advertisement section of the company newsletter, and of Organization C to

read the "junk mail" category of their business mail. Further, any interested person then had to take the initiative to obtain the cooperation and signature of their spouse and then mail the consent form to the researcher. There remains, therefore, no measure of how representative the sample may be of the intended population.

Additional constraints were imposed by this study requiring that both spouses participate. It is recognized that the subjects who found their way into this research project may differ from those who did not. There may be some unknown bias operating which differentiates between the respondent couples and those who did not respond.

Another uncontrolled factor was whether or not husbands and wives communicated with each other regarding their responses prior to recording them. The couples were not tested with the researcher on the premises. If the researcher had personally administered the research instrument, some of the factors named above may have been controlled, and it is likely the return rate would have been improved. As it was, the instrument mailed to the respondent's homes may have been readily ignored through disinterest, forgetfulness, or time constraints.

Altogether, these factors limit the generalizability and conclusions that may be drawn from this sample. On the other hand, given the paucity of research relating social

support and dual-worker families, it was decided that these limitations did not entirely invalidate the potential gain from this study.

Instruments

Three instruments were used in this investigation into the relationship between social support and spousal role sharing. In one instrument, subjects were asked to name and evaluate the support of the individual, primary members of their social network. The second instrument asked them to evaluate their satisfaction with the role sharing in the marital dyad. An additional instrument sought demographic information from the subjects.

Biographical Data Form

A brief personal information questionnaire (see Appendix C for a copy of the Biographical Data Form) was developed by the researcher to collect demographic data from each individual subject. This form requested information on age, gender, years married, number of children, age of children living in the home, educational level, occupation, family and personal income, and hours, weeks, and years of employment.

Spousal Role Sharing Scale

A questionnaire was developed by the researcher to determine how satisfied the subjects were with the way roles were shared within the marital dyad. This research instrument (see Appendix D) was adapted from the style of The Family APGAR Questionnaire (Smilkstein, 1978). APGAR was designed to give a rapid overview of the functional status of a family by addressing a family member's satisfaction in five categories: (1) Adaptation - how family resources are shared, (2) Partnership - how decisions are shared, (3) Growth - how nurturing is shared, (4) Affection - how emotional experiences are shared, and (5) Resolve - how time is shared.

For the purposes of the present study, the five questions in the Spousal Role Sharing Scale focused on spousal satisfaction regarding the sharing of the following role categories:

1. Household management (e.g., laundry, cooking, cleaning, and the maintenance of house, yard, and automobile).
2. Money management (e.g., bill paying, budgeting, and spending habits).
3. Child care responsibilities (e.g., spending time

doing things with the children, enforcing rules, and bathing and changing them).

4. Paid work responsibilities (e.g., having a job and the number of hours worked).

5. Social obligations (e.g., initiating and maintaining relationships with relatives, friends, and neighbors).

The respondent rated on a 3-point scale the degree to which satisfaction was perceived in each role category (1 = not very true, 2 = somewhat true, 3 = mostly true).

These role categories were selected for the purpose of construct validity because of the impact they have on the sense of well-being experienced by the members of dual-worker families. The literature reveals work and family role conflicts give rise to a myriad of dissatisfactions and resulting consequences. Based on a survey of roles in 1976, almost three fifths (57%) of both married men and women saw marriage as "all burdens and restrictions," while almost half (45%) viewed children as "all burdens and restrictions" (Douvan, 1978). The work role also yields lower marks than commonly believed. Pleck and Lang (1979) note that researchers have been asking people about the relative satisfactions they derive from the conflicting values of family and work. A considerable body of results has been accumulated from which Pleck and Lang

debunk the myth that workers routinely rank their work roles with high value.

Another common myth that is being challenged is that home and work are separate independent domains. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) found that the everyday conflicts and frustrations associated with the role areas of marriage, parenting, management of household economics, and employment were related to psychological distress. The reciprocal effects of work and family are well-documented (Axelson, 1963; Burke, 1982; Burke & Weir, 1976; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979; Keith & Schafer, 1984; Miller, 1984; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970; Szinovacz, 1979).

Social Network Measure

The Social Network Measure (see Appendix E) was used to measure the availability of social support experienced by each respondent. The Social Network Measure was developed by Roger E. Mitchell, Ph.D., Stanford University Medical School, and used with his permission (see Appendix B). The instrument assesses the degree of available social support in four categories:

1. Material assistance (i.e., task-oriented assistance).
2. Emotional support.

3. Companionship (i.e., communication of expectations, evaluation, and a shared world view).
4. Information (i.e., access to new and diverse information and social contacts).

Mitchell (1982) states that the four content categories of the Social Network Measure are highly intercorrelated (.7 or above). He concludes, therefore, that a summary score for the average amount of social support available can be derived by averaging across these content categories.

In the present study, respondents were asked to list the names of "the six adults to whom you feel the most close". This procedure is similar to that used by Gordon & Downing (1978), Wellman (1979), and Mitchell (1982). Wellman studied the intimates of a group of randomly sampled adult metropolitan residents, asking them to name the people they felt closest to, up to a maximum of six. Mitchell asked the same question of psychiatric clients, while Gordon and Downing used it with a sample of 686 married Irish women. Gordon and Downing assert, "By using this measure, we can insure that the network is not merely a superficial interactive group, but rather involves some degree of commitment" (p. 588).

In order to assess the degree of available social support, respondents were asked to describe the extent to which they relied upon each network member for the four

categories of support: (1) Material assistance, (2) emotional support, (3) companionship, and (4) information. The respondents rated on a 3-point scale the degree to which support in each category was provided by each network member (1 = hardly ever, 2 = some of the time, 3 = almost always).

Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether increased availability of social support correlates positively with increased satisfaction with spousal role-sharing in dual-worker families. Further propositions are that men and women differentially experience availability of social support and satisfaction with role sharing. The primary hypotheses to be tested are:

1. There is a positive correlation between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role-sharing for men and women in dual-worker families.

2. There is a positive correlation between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role-sharing for men in dual-worker families.

3. There is a positive correlation between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role-sharing for women in dual-worker families.

Additional hypotheses to be tested are:

4. Women report greater availability of social support than do men in dual-worker families.

5. Men report greater satisfaction with spousal role-sharing than do women in dual-worker families.

Statistical Analysis of the Data

The accumulated data were analyzed with the assistance of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) through the Computer Center at the University of Minnesota. Descriptive data from the Biographical Data form were categorized and means were calculated. Pearson product moment coefficients were calculated, correlating the social support variable with the role sharing variable. The t-test was used to test the difference between the means of the women and the men on both the social support and the role sharing variables.

Summary

The sample of subjects fit the dual-worker family definition used in this study, i.e., both husband and wife holding full-time jobs outside their home (professional and non-professional) and at the same time establishing a family

life with at least one child in the home. The sample was drawn from the employees of three metropolitan organizations which included two large business corporations and a vocational-technical educational institution. The sample included employees of the three organizations plus their spouses. Subjects were solicited through letters of invitation available at their employment site. Respondents who returned consent forms to the researcher were mailed the Research Questionnaire along with instructions for responding and returning the instrument to the researcher. In an effort to increase the response rate, a follow-up letter was mailed to delinquent subjects.

Limitations of this study derive from the selection procedure and from the test administration procedure. The potential response depended entirely on the initiative of the subjects, both as to becoming subjects as well as following the instructions for completing the Research Questionnaire without first discussing it within the marital dyad. Therefore, sample bias and potential non-standardized testing conditions limit the generalizability and conclusions that may be drawn from this study.

The research design is a correlational study of the interrelationship between social support and spousal role sharing, with social support the independent variable and

role sharing the dependent variable. Additional hypotheses propose that men and women differentially experience satisfaction with social support and spousal role sharing. The research instruments include a biographical data form, the Spousal Role Sharing Scale, and the Social Network Measure. Statistical analysis of the data focused on categorizing the biographical data and calculating means, correlating the variables by calculating Pearson product-moment coefficients, and using t-tests to establish the difference between the means of women and men on the variables.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing in dual-worker families. The primary hypotheses were that when social support is more readily available, the (1) couples, (2) men, and (3) women in dual-worker families are more satisfied with the way the spouses share their roles. Additional hypotheses tested were that women and men differentially experience availability of social support and satisfaction with role sharing.

Sample Response

In the first phase of sampling, the researcher solicited subjects through two business corporations. The solicitation of employees was made through both corporations in the same week. After two weeks, only 11 employees plus their spouses had mailed Consent Forms to the researcher indicating their willingness to participate in the study. At that point it was determined necessary to solicit from an additional organization in an effort to increase the number of participants.

A county vocational-technical educational institution was selected for the second phase of sampling. It was ten more days before the personnel directors on the three campuses of the educational institution individually agreed to allow their employees to be solicited for this study. The Invitation to Participate in the research study was then made available to the employees of that organization. During the initial contact time with the educational institution, two more Consent Forms were received as a result of the solicitation of the business corporations.

In the four weeks that followed solicitation at the educational institution, 16 more couples returned Consent Forms to the researcher. It is unknown whether all 16 came from the solicitation at the educational institution or whether some may have been late arrivals from the businesses solicited; although the former is assumed from the occupational descriptions reported by that group of sixteen.

Twenty-nine couples (i.e., 58 subjects) returned Consent Forms to the researcher. The Research Questionnaires were then mailed to the 58 respondents as all of the respondents qualified for the study. As intended, the Consent Form had served as an effective screening device by asking the respondents to answer "yes" or "no" regarding

whether or not they qualified on each of the criteria established for participation in the study.

Of the 29 couples who returned Consent Forms, 19 of them (i.e., 38 subjects) completed and returned the Research Questionnaire, representing a return rate of 66 percent. All 38 questionnaires were correctly completed and, therefore, were useable in the study.

Demographic Characteristics

The participants in this study were 19 marital dyads for a total sample size of 38 subjects. The subjects ranged in age from 28 to 60 years, with a mean age of 39.6 years. Men and women were close in age with means of 40.0 and 39.2 years, respectively. Table 1 reports age means.

The couples represented a broad range of years married. Three couples (7.9% of the sample) had been married three years while five couples (13.1% of the sample) were in their 30th and 31st years of marriage. The subjects were married a mean 14.8 years with the standard deviation 9.14. Table 1 indicates marital means.

All the couples had from one to three children presently living in their home with the mean being 1.87 children. Six couples (31.6% of the sample) reported having one child in the home, nine couples (47.3%) had two

children, and four couples (21.1% of the sample) had three children living with them. Table 1 records child means.

The mean career length was 15.7 years of full-time employment with the standard deviation 9.05. Males indicated a mean 17.3 years and females a mean 14.0 years of full-time employment experience. Table 1 reports career means of the sample.

Regarding their highest level of educational attainment, the 38 subjects all finished high school and six of them (15.8% of the sample) had completed a Master's degree. Table 1 indicates education frequency percentages.

The subjects represented a diversity of occupations. Eleven subjects listed the occupational titles of machine operator, warehouse worker, clerical, secretary, sales, tool and die maker, iron worker, and painter. Nine subjects listed manager, supervisor, legal assistant, executive secretary, computer management, and administrative coordinator. Sixteen subjects claimed the occupations of teacher, registered nurse, counselor, speech clinician, occupational therapist, and special education instructor. Two subjects listed director and restaurant owner as their occupations.

Table 1

Selected Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Couples	Men	Women
	N = 38	N = 19	N = 19
Means			
Age	39.6	40.0	39.2
Years married	14.8	14.5	15.1
Children in home	1.9		
Career length	15.7	17.3	14.0
Education (percent)			
High school graduate	31.6	26.3	36.8
Two-year college or trade	23.7	31.6	15.8
College degree	28.9	36.8	21.1
Master's degree	15.8	5.3	26.3

The annual family income of the subjects ranged from two couples (5.3% of the sample) reporting under \$30,000 to two couples (5.3% of the sample) earning over \$70,000. The modal annual family income reported was in the \$51,000 to \$70,000 bracket earned by 52.6% of the subjects. Table 2 depicts the annual family income of the sample.

Table 2

Annual Family Income

Income	Frequency	Percent
Under \$30,000	2	5.3
\$30,000 to \$40,000	8	21.0
\$41,000 to \$50,000	6	15.8
\$51,000 to \$70,000	20	52.6
Over \$70,000	2	5.3
	N = 38	100.0

The 38 subjects reported personal annual income ranging from one person (2.6% of the sample) earning less than \$10,000 to four people (10.5% of the sample) earning over \$41,000. The mean, median, and modal personal income was in the \$21,000 to \$30,000 range earned by 31.6% of the subjects. Table 3 addresses the annual personal income of the subjects.

Table 3

Annual Personal Income

Income	Frequency	Percent
Under \$10,000	1	2.6
\$10,000 to \$20,000	11	29.0
\$21,000 to \$30,000	12	31.6
\$31,000 to \$40,000	10	26.3
Over \$41,000	4	10.5
	N = 38	100.0

Males reported higher annual salaries than did the female subjects. Males earned in the \$10,000 to over \$41,000 bracket while females earned in the under \$10,000 to \$40,000 range. The modal personal annual income for males was \$31,000 to \$40,000 while for females it was \$21,000 to \$30,000. Table 4 differentiates the annual personal income of male and female subjects.

Table 4

Annual Personal Income of Males and Females

Income	Frequency	
	Males	Females
Under \$10,000	0	1
\$10,000 to \$20,000	5	6
\$21,000 to \$30,000	4	8
\$31,000 to \$40,000	6	4
Over \$41,000	4	0
	N = 19	N = 19

As required for the study, all of the subjects in the sample had been employed 35 or more hours per week for nine of the past 12 months. Fifty percent of the subjects worked the modal 40-hour week. One female subject (2.6% of the sample) reported the sample minimum of 36 hours and two male subjects (5.3% of the sample) reported the sample maximum of 60 hours worked per week. A mean 43.6 hours of employment per week was reported by the combined subjects.

Males in this sample worked significantly more employment hours per week than did females (significance level = .009). Males worked a mean 46.0 hours while females

worked a mean 41.2 hours per week. Table 5 depicts the hours per week of employment reported by the subjects.

Table 5

Hours per Week of Employment

Hours per Week	Frequency		
	Couples	Males	Females
36	1	0	1
38	1	0	1
40	19	8	11
42	3	1	2
45	5	2	3
50	6	5	1
52	1	1	0
60	2	2	0
Number	38	19	19
Mean	43.6	46.0*	41.2*

* Difference significant at .01 level

The majority of the subjects (57.9% of the sample) were employed 52 weeks the past year with four subjects (10.5% of

the sample) claiming the study's minimum of 36 weeks of employment. The subjects worked a mean 49.5 weeks the past year, with the female mean 49.3 weeks and the male mean 49.7 weeks. Table 6 indicates the weeks per year of employment reported by the subjects.

Table 6

Weeks per Year of Employment

Weeks per Year	Frequency		
	Couples	Males	Females
36	4	2	2
38	2	0	2
40	1	0	1
42	2	0	2
44	1	0	1
48	2	2	0
50	3	2	1
52	23	13	10
Number	38	19	19
Mean	49.5	49.7	49.3

Subjects were not asked their ethnic background. The researcher asked the personnel directors of the organizations from which the sample base was drawn regarding the ethnicity of their employees. All claimed an employee ratio of less than 10% minority backgrounds with 90% or more White employees.

Statistical Analysis of the Hypotheses

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between two variables: (1) The availability of social support and (2) spousal role sharing in dual worker families. Accordingly, three primary hypotheses were set forth. In addition, two hypotheses were established regarding the differential response of wives and husbands on each of these two variables.

Subjects completed two instruments, namely (1) the Spousal Role Sharing Scale and (2) the Social Network Measure. In order to test the three primary hypotheses, Pearson product-moment coefficients were calculated, correlating the social support variable with the role sharing variable. The correlation coefficients were calculated on the summary score for all content areas on each of the two instruments.

To test the two additional hypotheses, t-tests were calculated, comparing the difference between the means of males and females on each of the two variables. The responses of the women and men were compared in relation to social support and also in relation to spousal role sharing.

All 38 subjects named their spouse on the Social Network Measure. The decision was made to exclude this entry from the statistical analysis because the intent of this study was to measure the influence of social support external to the family on role sharing within the marital dyad.

Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis set forth was that there is a positive correlation between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing for men and women in dual-worker families. The results did not support the hypothesis. There was not a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables for the entire sample (men and women combined). The results indicated a weak, nonsignificant negative correlation ($r = -.137$, $p = .212$) between social support and role sharing for this sample. Table 7 describes the correlation of the responses of all the subjects on the Social Network Measure and the Spousal Role Sharing Scale.

Table 7

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Between
Variables for All Subjects $N = 38$

	Social Network Measure
Spousal Role Sharing Scale	-.137
	$p = .212$ (not significant)

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis was that there is a positive correlation between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing for men in dual-worker families. The results did not support the hypothesis. There was not a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables for the men in the sample. The results indicated a weak, nonsignificant positive correlation ($r = .047$, $p = .424$) between social support and role sharing for the men. Table 8 describes the correlation of the responses of all the men on the Social Network Measure and the Spousal Role Sharing Scale.

Table 8

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Between
Variables for Men N = 19

	Social Network Measure
Spousal Role Sharing Scale	.047
	p = .424 (not significant)

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis states that there is a positive correlation between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing for women in dual-worker families. The results did not support the hypothesis. There was not a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables for the women in the sample. The results indicated a moderate, nonsignificant negative correlation ($r = -.335$, $p = .080$) between social support and role sharing for the women. Table 9 describes the correlation of the responses of all the women on the Social Network Measure and the Spousal Role Sharing Scale.

Table 9

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Between
Variables for Women N = 19

	Social Network Measure
Spousal Role Sharing Scale	-.335
	p = .080 (not significant)

Hypothesis Four

The fourth hypothesis suggested women experience greater availability of social support than do the men in dual-worker families. The results supported the hypothesis. In a comparison of the means of women and men on the Social Network Measure, women reported significantly higher availability of social support than did men. The results were statistically significant at the .01 level of significance ($t = -3.14$, significance level = .004). Table 10 sets forth the Social Network Measure by the male and female groups.

Table 10

Social Network Measure by Females and Males

Group	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
Females	19	53.32*	4.15
Males	19	46.58*	8.39

 $t = -3.14$

significance level = .004

* Difference significant at .01 level

Hypothesis Five

The fifth hypothesis suggested men experience greater satisfaction with spousal role sharing than do the women in dual-worker families. The results did not support the hypothesis. Men did not report greater role sharing satisfaction at a statistically significant level ($t = .85$, significance level = .401). In a comparison of the means of women and men on the Spousal Role Sharing Scale, men scored slightly higher on satisfaction with spousal role sharing, but the difference was not statistically significant. Table 11 depicts the Spousal Role Sharing Scale by the female and male groups.

Table 11

Spousal Role Sharing Scale by Females and Males

Group	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
Females	19	12.63	1.95
Males	19	13.16	1.86

$t = .85$

significance level = .401 (not significant)

Summary

The participants in this study were 19 marital dyads for a total sample size of 38 subjects. Men and women were approximately the same age, ranging from 28 to 60 years, with an average age of 40 years. In terms of duration of marriage, the range was three to 31 years with an average of 15 years. From one to three children lived with each of the marital dyads.

The respondents presented a diverse picture in terms of education, occupation, and personal and family income. All had graduated from high school and 45% held college degrees. Occupations ranged from skilled workers to professionals.

Subjects reported annual family income from under \$30,000 to over \$70,000 with 53% of the sample in the \$51,000 to \$70,000 bracket. Annual personal income was higher for males than females. Fifty-two percent of the men and 21% of the women earned over \$30,000.

Men in this sample worked significantly more employment hours per week than did women, with men working an average 46 hours while women worked an average 41 hours. Women and men worked an equivalent 49 weeks per year over an average career span of 16 years.

Statistical analysis of the hypotheses was accomplished by calculating Pearson product-moment coefficients on the three primary hypotheses and t-tests on the two additional hypotheses. None of the three primary hypotheses correlating availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing were supported at a statistically significant level.

The research results supported the fourth hypothesis at the .01 level of significance. Women reported significantly higher availability of social support than did men. The fifth hypothesis remained unsupported as men did not report greater role sharing satisfaction at a significant level.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Need for the Study

As a result of increasing numbers of married women entering the labor force, the dual-income lifestyle has become the norm in our society (Bernard, 1981; Nadelson & Nadelson, 1980; Parker et al., 1981). For the spouses involved, the accelerated pace of social change from traditional to dual-employed creates both benefits (Burke & Weir, 1976; Howell, 1973; Warshaw, 1976; Yogev, 1981) and costs (Bernard, 1981; Keith & Schafer, 1984; Nadelson & Nadelson, 1980; Richardson, 1981). Economic, marital, and personal gains are frequently offset by losses in the form of multiple-role stress (Bernard, 1981; Keith & Schafer, 1984; Mortimer & London, 1983; Sekaran, 1983), sex-role conflict (Axelson, 1963; Burke & Weir, 1976; Rice, 1979; Sekaran, 1983), and role inequity factors (Berman et al., 1975; Hall & Hall, 1979; Rice, 1979).

These losses reduce life satisfaction for the women more than the men (Sekaran, 1983), primarily because the women, though employed, remain responsible for most of the

family work (Hall & Hall, 1979; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979; Pleck, 1980). Traditional sex-role socialization fails to prepare men for family-role responsibility (Johnson & Johnson, 1977; Rice, 1979; Rosen et al., 1975) and leaves women feeling guilty when they transgress culturally determined norms (Hall & Hall, 1979; Sekaran, 1983). Increasingly, researchers are looking to the potential benefits of role equity in seeking factors to mitigate the costs of the dual-worker lifestyle (Hall & Hall, 1979; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975; Yogev, 1981).

Social support networks are another area of investigation for factors that may enhance the dual-worker pattern. It is well documented that social support networks enhance the well-being of individuals (Cassell, 1974; Cobb, 1976; Froland et al., 1979; Holan & Moos, 1982; Kelly et al., 1977; Tolsdorf, 1976). But it remains unclear whether the factors influencing the well-being of individuals generalizes to the marital dyads in dual-worker families (Milardo et al., 1983; Mitchell & Trickett, 1980; Parker et al., 1981; Richardson, 1981).

While it is apparent that the structure of a person's social network has an effect on marital roles and marital satisfaction, the research yields disparate findings. Integrated marital roles have been attributed to loose-knit social networks (Bott, 1957; Nelson, 1966), shared networks

(Gordon & Downing, 1978), and dual-worker lifestyles (Udry & Hall, 1965). Marital satisfaction has been attributed to equally disparate sources including self-disclosure with friends (Dickson-Markham, 1983), emotional support from husbands (Oates, 1981), and egalitarian role orientations (Nelson, 1966).

The literature is unclear whether social support networks and role equity factors contribute to the well-being of members of dual-worker families. Szinovacz remains critical of researchers' failure, to date, to establish the causal link between variables in studies of dual-employed lifestyles (1979). Yet, for continued improvement of the quality of life, those factors must be identified which increase the benefits while reducing the costs of the dual-worker pattern.

Statement of the Problem

It is clear that the increasing number of families seeking to maintain a dual-employed lifestyle has increased the need for information regarding the unique set of concerns, needs, and characteristics particular to dual-worker partners and the social support networks in which they are embedded (Parker et al., 1981). The present study sought to address that need, in part. This research investigated the relationship between the availability of

social support and the satisfaction of the marital partners in dual-worker families with the way spousal roles are shared.

Sample

The sample of subjects fit the dual-worker family definition used in this research, i.e., both husband and wife held full-time jobs outside their home (professional and non-professional) and at the same time established a family life with at least one child in the home. The sample was drawn from the employees of three metropolitan organizations which included two large business corporations and a vocational-technical educational institution. The subjects included employees of the three organizations plus their spouses. Of the 29 couples who consented to participate in the study, 19 of them (i.e., 38 subjects) returned the Research Questionnaire, representing a return rate of 66 percent.

Men and women respondents were approximately the same age, ranging from 28 to 60 years, with an average age of 40 years. In terms of duration of marriage, the range was three to 31 years with an average of 15 years. From one to three children lived with each of the marital dyads.

The respondents presented a diverse picture in terms of education, occupation, and personal and family income. All

had graduated from high school and 45% held college degrees. Occupations ranged from skilled workers to professionals. Subjects reported annual family income from under \$30,000 to over \$70,000 with 53% of the sample in the \$51,000 to \$70,000 bracket. Annual personal income was higher for males than females. Fifty-two percent of the men and 21% of the women earned over \$30,000.

The men in the sample worked significantly more employment hours per week than did women, with men working an average 46 hours while women worked an average 41 hours. Women and men worked an equivalent 49 weeks per year over an average career span of 16 years.

Design

The research design was a correlational study investigating the relationship between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing in dual-worker families. The research instruments included a biographical data form, the Spousal Role Sharing Scale, and the Social Network Measure. The Spousal Role Sharing Scale assessed how satisfied the subjects were with the way five categories of roles were shared within the marital dyad. The five role categories were: (1) Household management, (2) Money management, (3) Child care responsibilities, (4) Paid work responsibilities, and (5) Social obligations. The

Social Network Measure assessed the availability of social support experienced by each respondent. Four categories of social support were measured, as follows: (1) Material assistance, (2) Emotional support, (3) Companionship, and (4) Information.

The primary hypotheses were that when social support is more readily available, the couples, husbands, and wives in dual-worker families are more satisfied with the way the spouses share their roles. Additional hypotheses tested were that women report greater availability of social support and men report greater satisfaction with role sharing.

Findings

In order to test the three primary hypotheses, Pearson product-moment coefficients were calculated, correlating the social support variable with the role sharing variable. The correlation coefficients were calculated on the summary score for all content areas on each of the two instruments, i.e., Spousal Role Sharing Scale and Social Network Measure.

To test the two additional hypotheses, t-tests were calculated, comparing the difference between the means of males and females on each of the two variables. The

responses of the women and men were compared in relation to social support and also in relation to spousal role sharing.

Results of these analyses supported only one of the hypotheses at a statistically significant level. Women reported significantly higher availability of social support than did men.

In a comparison of women and men in relation to spousal role sharing, the groups' means fell in the predicted direction. Men reported greater satisfaction with role sharing, but not at a significant level.

The correlation between social support and role sharing fell in the predicted direction for men. The results indicated a positive correlation, but not at a significant level. For women and for couples, the correlation between the two variables fell in a direction opposite from the one predicted. The results indicated a nonsignificant negative correlation.

Discussion

Primary Hypotheses

The primary hypotheses in this study focused on the assumption that greater availability of social support would yield greater satisfaction with spousal role sharing. The

results for the men fell in the predicted direction, though not at a significant level. For wives and for couples, on the other hand, the direction of the findings relating social support and spousal role sharing was opposite to that which was hypothesized. Though the results did not reach statistically significant levels, the direction indicated that the greater the availability of social support, the less satisfaction with spousal role sharing. A review of the statistical data indicates that the strength of the wives' scores pulled the couples' scores into a negative correlation between variables.

This researcher found no studies that have investigated the relationship between the availability of social support and satisfaction with spousal role sharing in dual-worker families. There remains, therefore, no established reference point for the findings in this study. Udry & Hall (1965), however, found that role segregation is not related to the interconnectedness of the social network if the wife is employed. Their findings stand in contrast to studies of traditional families wherein spouses who got emotional satisfaction and material helps from external relationships demanded correspondingly less of their spouse (Bott, 1957; Nelson, 1966). It is plausible, then, that role satisfaction, like role segregation, may differ between traditional and dual-worker families. The findings of this

study suggest, therefore, that it may not be possible to formulate assumptions about dual-worker families from the more readily available studies of traditional marriages.

A possible explanation for nonsignificant findings between variables in this study centers on the homogeneity and stability of the sample groups. The female and male groups did not significantly differ in age, education, years married, or career length. In addition, the respondents in this sample were established dual-worker couples, who, on average, had been married 15 years and pursuing careers for 16 years. Sekaran (1983) notes that couples married and pursuing careers for five years "can be termed a sample of 'survivors' who have, in all probability, sorted out several problematic issues as a family unit" (p. 171).

Further, to be eligible for participation, this study required the cooperation of husbands and wives. That fact may have introduced another level of homogeneity in the sample that would influence the research findings. Couples who were not so cooperative, and, therefore, not represented in this study, may have provided more disparate responses than the present sample. It is possible that the nature of the sample accounted for the weakness of the relationships observed in this research.

Additional Hypotheses

A statistically significant finding was that wives in dual-worker families experienced greater availability of social support than did husbands, as was hypothesized. In the social support categories of material assistance, emotional support, companionship, and information, women appear to experience greater patterns of help utilization. These findings are consistent with those of Hoyt & Babchuk (1983) who reported women are more likely to be cited as confidants and to have confidant ties than are men.

It is well to note, however, that the present study limited the measure of social support to those sources external to the marital dyad. Since wives are a primary source of social support for husbands (Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Schlossberg, 1980), the men in this study might have reported greater availability of social support if spousal support had been included as a source. Therefore, the findings of this study must be narrowly prescribed: Wives in dual-worker families report significantly greater availability of social support from sources external to the marital dyad than do their husbands.

Although no statistically significant differences were found between females and males on role sharing, it is interesting to note that the means of the satisfaction scores on role sharing did fall as hypothesized: Husbands

in dual-worker families experienced greater satisfaction with role sharing than did their wives. These results are consistent with the literature indicating greater multiple-role stress and less perceived life satisfaction is reported by women in dual-worker families (Bernard, 1981; Sekaran, 1983).

Why did the differences on satisfaction with role sharing between the husbands and wives in the present sample fail to reach significant levels as might be indicated from previous studies using quantitative measures? Perhaps the wives had internal, psychological reasons to perceive the role sharing to be fair and equitable, and, therefore, reported it to be satisfying. Researchers have found that employed women will expand their roles rather than cross their feminine identity tension lines and expect egalitarian role sharing within the marital dyad (Hall & Hall, 1979; Yoge, 1981). Rapoport and Rapoport (1975) suggest that the traditional model of role sharing may be perceived as equitable only because of lack of awareness of the inequities involved. Possibly the wives reported satisfaction as a result of focusing on the marital dyad's progress toward equitable role sharing, even though the goal of equity has not been reached.

Former studies focused on quantitative measures of role sharing that must be interpreted in terms of an egalitarian

orientation (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979; Pleck, 1980; Sekaran, 1983). Satisfaction with role sharing is based on qualitative measures that point to issues of equity. As suggested above, it may be that women perceive fairness or equity in the midst of unequal circumstances. It is plausible, then, that as equity and equality are different constructs, assumptions about equity cannot be extrapolated from the literature on equality.

Another explanation is possible, though not specifically noted in the literature. It may be that the narrow difference in the groups' satisfaction scores was the result of husbands reporting in agreement with their wives. Possibly husbands are aware of the greater multiple-role stress experienced by their wives, and, for this reason, report levels of satisfaction equivalent to their wives. The men may sincerely desire role equity but find that actually implementing it is very difficult (Hall & Hall, 1979; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1975). Studies that might give credence to this explanation are those reporting that men have not been socialized or trained to participate in or assume responsibility for homemaking and childrearing roles or to become a primary psychological parent (Johnson & Johnson, 1977; Rosen et al., 1975).

As will be noted in the following section, several limiting factors may have influenced the outcome of this

study, as well. Further research is required before the conclusion can be reached that no significant relationship exists between the availability of social support and spousal role sharing in dual-worker families.

Limitations

Limitations of this study must be considered as factors that influence the research findings and the generalizability of the study. As with most investigations of this nature, many factors remained uncontrolled.

Sampling and Test Administration

The sampling selection procedure was not uniform for all subjects. Each of the three organizations involved in this study used a different procedure for presenting the letter of invitation to the subjects, thereby introducing sampling bias.

Another uncontrolled factor was whether or not wives and husbands communicated with each other regarding their responses prior to recording them. Non-uniform test administration procedures may further bias the findings of this study.

The small sample size limits the conclusions that may be drawn from the statistical analysis of the data. The

smaller the sample, the greater the error that is introduced in making inferences about single means and about the difference between the means. And the smaller the sample, the greater the difficulty in obtaining correlational data at statistically significant levels.

Representativeness

As the researcher was not allowed an active role in soliciting subjects, the potential response depended entirely on the initiative of the employees to respond to passive solicitation modes. There remains, therefore, no measure of how representative the sample may be of the intended population. There may be some unknown bias operating which differentiates between those who responded and those who did not. Further, as indicated in the previous section, the homogeneity and stability of the subjects further limit how representative the sample may be.

The small sample size is of concern when considering the representativeness of the sample. The smaller the sample, the less likely it is representative of the intended population, and the more likely it will skew the study results.

Another consideration regarding the representativeness of the sample relates to the ethnicity, education, and income level of the respondents. The subjects were drawn

from a White, well-educated, middle-class population. Conclusions drawn from research results with this sample may not generalize to minority groups, nor to those who substantially differ in education or income.

Instruments

It was apparent from a review of the literature that the concepts of dual-worker family, spousal role sharing, and social support are imprecise and cover a constellation of characteristics rather than representing uniform or homogeneous attributes. Further, a paucity of literature exists relating social support and dual-worker families. And no studies were found that investigated role sharing in qualitative terms. There remains, therefore, an inadequate supply of instruments by which to test these concepts and their interrelationship.

The Social Network Measure developed by Roger E. Mitchell, Ph.D., Stanford University Medical School, was one instrument used in this study. The only information available regarding this instrument was that the four content categories are highly intercorrelated. The face validity of the items persuaded the researcher to use the Social Network Measure.

No instrument was available to investigate role sharing in qualitative terms. Therefore, the researcher developed

an instrument for use in this study, striving for construct validity in the items selected. The Spousal Role Sharing Scale was adapted from The Family APGAR Questionnaire (Smilkstein, 1978). APGAR was designed to give a rapid overview of the functional status of a family by addressing a family member's satisfaction levels.

Limitations of this study derive from the fact that nothing is known about the reliability or validity of the two instruments used, and internal consistency is known for only one instrument. Further, no check was built into the instruments to insure honest, accurate subject responses. This study depended on the integrity of subjects' perceptions and self-reporting. Therefore, scores from these two instruments must be viewed with caution.

Altogether, the limitations of the instruments, the sampling and test administration procedures, and the representativeness of the sample hinder the generalizability and conclusions that may be drawn from this study. These factors must be considered in deriving implications and recommendations from the research.

Recommendations and Implications

Based on the research findings and the limitations noted above, several recommendations can be made for future

research. While the hypotheses relating social support and role sharing were not supported, nonetheless, the data do provide some initial information on the subject. Recall that the husbands' scores were in the hypothesized direction of a positive relationship between the variables, but that the strength of the wives' scores pulled the couples' scores into a negative relationship between the two variables. The data give rise to some important questions: As dissatisfaction with role sharing increases, are wives relying more on external social support as a means of expanding their roles? Does a woman depend on social support from outside the family rather than risk perceived or actual marital breakdown by challenging her spouse to more satisfactory role sharing? Are the constructs of social support and role sharing sufficiently definitive as to be reliably measured in qualitative terms? For example, regarding the men's responses in the present study, what was measured - the intended variables or some entirely different construct such as general life satisfaction?

The findings that wives experience greater availability of social support and husbands experience greater satisfaction with role sharing also provide valuable data that suggest future research. Do husbands and wives differentially avail themselves of social support? Is it availability of social support or utilization of social

support that distinguishes men's and women's experience? When asked about satisfaction with role sharing, what question is being answered, internally, by the subject - one of perceived fairness or rather a measure of equal sharing? Questions like these are suggestive of how the findings of this study can provide valuable points of departure into research investigating spousal role sharing and social support in dual-worker families.

The constructs of role equity and role equality must be clarified and researched, as it appears extrapolations cannot be made from one to the other. The present study indicates that hypotheses based on quantitative measures may not be applicable to the qualitative aspects of role sharing. Hansen (1987) suggests, "It may be appropriate to study some aspects of dual-career families (e.g.,...equity issues) in a more qualitative way" (p. 126).

Likewise, the concept of social support must be clarified to determine differences, if any, between quantitative measures of help utilization and qualitative measures based on perceived availability of social support. Ball's (1983) study found that while the perceived potential helpfulness of network persons was high (qualitative measure), a majority of the subjects reported that they seldom or never requested such help (quantitative measure).

The issue of instrumentation must be addressed as an outcome of investigators suggesting that the use of qualitative indices of role sharing and social support can make a meaningful contribution to the research and practice of counseling psychologists (Hansen, 1987; Holahan & Moos, 1982; Mitchell & Trickett, 1980). In order to fulfill these recommended directions in research, efforts must be made to establish valid and reliable instruments utilizing qualitative measures.

Further implications for counseling psychologists may be derived from the findings of this study that women experience significantly greater social support than do men and that women are not as satisfied with role sharing as are men. The results underscore the need for programs oriented toward improving the benefits of the dual-worker lifestyle. As a means of improving the quality as well as the quantity of social support as recommended by Holahan & Moos (1982), men, in particular, must be taught how to build, maintain, and utilize social support networks. And women must be helped in addressing "the superwoman syndrome which limited time and energy resources render impossible as a workable life-style" (Gilbert, Rachlin, 1987, p. 13).

Equitable role sharing is a dyadic issue and must be similarly addressed, both in research and in counseling

practice. The dual-income pattern may be better understood by studying the similarities and differences of family members who share the same family situation. There is merit, therefore, in studies focused on the responses of both members of the marital dyad, as modeled in the present research. And in counseling practice, O'Neil, Fishman, and Kinsella-Shaw (1987) assert, "We recommend conjoint career counseling as the preferred treatment mode with couples. This approach implies assessing each spouse and the couple together in a variety of career and family roles" (p. 87).

Projections for the future are that women and men will continue to be expected to combine the roles of spouse, parent, and employee (Bernard, 1981; Hester & Dickerson, 1982). Counseling psychologists need to prepare themselves to assist marital partners in optimally handling these roles. They are encouraged to use role equity and social support as potentially valuable conceptual frameworks. Gilbert & Rachlin (1987) note, "The concept of equity may prove a useful framework within which conflict areas can be identified and clarified" (p. 35). Mitchell & Trickett (1980) suggest that counselors must be willing to move away from intrapsychic explanations for problems in favor of an interpersonal, skill-development framework that utilizes the social networks in which individuals are embedded.

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that society is rapidly changing from a traditional to a dual-employed orientation. Thus, the partners in dual-worker families are constantly being required to realign their attitudes, expectations, and behaviors regarding family and work roles. Counseling psychologists would do well, therefore, to make it a priority to provide individuals and couples with the skills to increase their utilization of social support and to reduce multiple-role stress, sex-role conflict, and role inequity issues within their dual-worker lifestyle. It is hoped that this study may contribute, in some small measure, to that goal.

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Appendix A
CORRESPONDENCE INVITING PARTICIPATION
IN THE STUDY



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

College of Education

Counseling and Student Personnel Psychology Program
Department of Educational Psychology
139 Burton Hall
178 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Invitation to Participate in Research

You and your spouse are invited to participate in an important research study concerning dual-earner couples. We would like to send you a short, easy-to-answer questionnaire asking about your satisfaction with family and work roles.

We need the cooperation of a large number of employed couples. To qualify as participants, you and your spouse 1) must have at least one child currently living in your home, and 2) must each have been employed 35 or more hours per week for at least nine of the past 12 months.

Any information that you provide will be completely confidential. Hennepin Technical Centers will not be involved beyond this point of invitation. They will not have access to the returned questionnaires nor will they ever learn whether or not you participated. Upon receipt of the Consent Form, a research code will be substituted for your name. Your individual responses will not be reported to anyone at any time. Only the summary of anonymous findings will be used in reporting the results of this study.

Please return the attached **Consent Form** within one week. We will then mail you two identical Research Questionnaires and a postage-paid return envelope. In appreciation of your willingness to participate, we will send you a summary of the final research report if you so request. If you have any questions, please call Bonnie Harris at 884-9941.

Your willingness to participate in this study will be very much appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Bonnie J. Harris
Graduate Student

L. Sunny Hansen, Ph.D.
Professor

CONSENT FORM

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this research project. Because this study focuses on dual-career couples, it is necessary that both you and your spouse agree to participate. Participation simply involves answering a 15 minute questionnaire which will be mailed to you, then returning it in a postage-paid return envelope. Your signature indicates that you have read the information in the attached Invitation and have decided to participate. I do not anticipate that the study will cause anyone discomfort. You are free, however, to withdraw from the study at any future time.

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mailing Address _____
Number and Street

_____ City State Zip

Do you have at least one child currently living at home?

Yes _____ No _____

Has EACH spouse been employed 35 or more hours per week for nine of the last 12 months?

Yes _____ No _____

Indicate by checking here _____ if you wish to receive a summary of research findings.

Please return this form within 7 days.

Mail to:

Bonnie J. Harris
9912 Brookside Avenue South
Bloomington, MN 55431

Your cooperation and speed in responding are appreciated. Thanks!



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

College of Education

Counseling and Student Personnel Psychology Program
Department of Educational Psychology
139 Burton Hall
178 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Research Participant:

Thank you for agreeing to assist me with my research project. Two weeks ago I mailed questionnaires for you and your spouse to complete regarding work, family, and relationship satisfactions. Although I realize the demands on your time are many, I hope you will take the time to return the answered questionnaires to me. A high return rate is vital to research projects such as this.

If you did not receive the research materials or if you have misplaced them, please drop me a note or call me at 884-9941 and I will send you replacements. Your assistance in this project is very important for its completion.

Sincerely yours,

Bonnie J. Harris
9912 Brookside Avenue So.
Bloomington, MN 55431

Appendix B
PERMISSION TO USE INSTRUMENT

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

College of Education

Counseling and Student Personnel Psychology Program
Department of Educational Psychology
139 Burton Hall
178 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

September 28, 1984

Dr. Roger E. Mitchell
Social Ecology Laboratory
Dept. of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences TD-114
Stanford University Medical School
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Dr. Mitchell:

May I have your permission to use the Social Network Measure in a research study for my master's paper? I am completing the M.A. program in Educational Psychology under the advisorship of Dr. Lorraine (Sunny) Hansen.

I found reference to the Social Network Measure on page 392 of:

Mitchell, R.E. Social Networks and Psychiatric Clients: The Personal and Environmental Context. American Journal of Community Psychology, 1982, Vol. 10, No. 4.

The purpose of my study is exploratory. I am interested in learning whether there is a correlation between satisfaction with spousal role-sharing and social network measures. I hope to study the responses of men and women from approximately 50 dual-employed families. With your permission to use the Social Network Measure, I am prepared to begin sampling the subjects immediately.

Enclosed is a copy of my proposed questionnaire. I will, of course, identify the Social Network Measure by Roger E. Mitchell in any publication or paper regarding the tool.

In closing, I offer a final request for your permission to use the Social Network Measure. To facilitate your prompt response, a consent form is printed on page two and a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Thank you for your attention to my request.

Sincerely yours,

Bonnie J. Harris
9912 Brookside Avenue South
Bloomington, MN 55431
Phone: (612) 884-9941

Enc: Research Questionnaire
Stamped, self-addressed envelope



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Counseling and Student Personnel Psychology Program
Department of Educational Psychology
139 Burton Hall
178 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Bonnie J. Harris
Page 2

Bonnie J. Harris ✓ has my permission
 does not have my permission

to use the Social Network Measure as proposed and
illustrated in this letter and accompanying enclosure.

Roger E. Mitchell, PhD
Signature

10/12/84
Date

Comments:

The enclosed copies of some more recent papers

Appendix C
COVER LETTER AND BIOGRAPHICAL DATA FORM



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

College of Education

Counseling and Student Personnel Psychology Program
Department of Educational Psychology
139 Burton Hall
178 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Research Participant:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. I hope you will find it to be an interesting experience.

I have enclosed two research questionnaires, one for you and one for your spouse. I urge you to take your time and complete the survey thoughtfully. The value of this kind of research and the resulting assumptions psychologists make about employed men and women depend upon the kinds of information you are willing to share.

I want to emphasize again the confidentiality of your responses. Your employer will never see your survey nor will your name ever be used at any point in discussing or writing the results. To protect your privacy, your name has been translated into a research code and no one other than myself will be able to identify your responses with your name.

A final note: both you and your spouse will be completing identical questionnaires. Please do not discuss the survey until each of you has independently answered all the questions in writing. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at 884-9941. I will be happy to answer them.

Please complete the survey and mail it back in the return envelope within two weeks, if possible. Your speed in responding is greatly appreciated.

With appreciation,


Bonnie J. Harris
Graduate Student

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE: Biographical Data

Directions: Please answer the following questions by filling in the blanks or checking the appropriate responses. All your answers will be kept completely confidential. It is important that all items are completed.

1. Your age _____
2. Male _____ Female _____ (check one)
3. Number of years married (include prior marriages, if any) _____
4. Number of children _____
5. Ages of children currently living in your home _____
6. Check the highest level of education you have attained
____ Completed 8th grade
____ Graduated from high school or GED
____ Graduated from trade-business school or two-year college
____ Graduated from college
____ Completed degree at master's level
____ Completed degree at doctoral level or equivalent
7. Occupation _____
8. Annual family income
____ Under \$30,000
____ \$30,000 to \$40,000
____ \$41,000 to \$50,000
____ \$51,000 to \$70,000
____ Over \$71,000
9. Annual personal income
____ Under \$10,000
____ \$10,000 to \$20,000
____ \$21,000 to \$30,000
____ \$31,000 to \$40,000
____ Over \$41,000
10. In a typical week, how many hours do you devote to paid employment (including non-office hours)? _____ hours
11. In the past year, how many weeks were you employed 35 or more hours per week? _____ weeks
12. How many years have you been employed full-time (for the purpose of this survey, full-time employment is defined as 35 or more hours per week for a minimum of 36 weeks per year)? _____ years

(continued)

Appendix D
SPOUSAL ROLE SHARING SCALE

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PART TWO: Research Data

Directions: Put a circle around the number which most accurately describes how true each statement is for you. (1 = not very true, 2 = somewhat true, 3 = mostly true). Circle only one number in response to each statement. It is important that all items are completed.

	<u>Not Very True</u>	<u>Somewhat True</u>	<u>Mostly True</u>
1. I am satisfied with the way my spouse and I share household responsibilities (such as laundry, cooking, cleaning, and the maintenance of house, yard, and automobile).	1	2	3
2. I am satisfied with the way my spouse and I share money management (including bill paying, budgeting, and spending habits).	1	2	3
3. I am satisfied with the way my spouse and I share child care responsibilities (such as spending time doing things with the children, enforcing rules, and bathing and changing them).	1	2	3
4. I am satisfied with the way my spouse and I share paid work responsibilities (including having a job and the number of hours worked).	1	2	3
5. I am satisfied with the way my spouse and I share responsibility for initiating and maintaining our family's relationships with relatives, friends, and neighbors.	1	2	3

Appendix E
SOCIAL NETWORK MEASURE

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The next section should not be answered until you have taken the following three steps.

Step 1: Think of the six ADULTS to whom you FEEL THE MOST CLOSE. Identify each adult by their first name in one of the boxes located at the middle of this page and on following pages.

For example, Person 1. Person 2.

When finished, return to Step 2.

Step 2: In the blank next to each box, state the relationship of each of the persons to you. Try to be as specific as possible. For example, use associate at work, member of my club or organization, father, spouse, sister-in law, etc., rather than "friend" or "relative". When finished, return to Step 3.

Step 3: Four questions are listed under each box. Put a circle around the number that most accurately describes your response IN RELATION TO THE PERSON NAMED IN THE BOX. (1 = hardly ever, 2 = some of the time, 3 = almost always).

Person 1. Relationship to you _____

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Some of the Time</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>
A. Is this someone who gives you help when you need it, for example, when you are sick, moving, or need a loan?	1	2	3
B. Is this someone who will listen to you when you are feeling down?	1	2	3
C. Is this someone you can be with when you want to have fun and enjoy yourself?	1	2	3
D. Is this someone who tells you about good things to know about, such as new places to go, or where you can get help when you need it?	1	2	3

Person 2.

Relationship to you _____

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Some of the Time</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>
A. Is this someone who gives you help when you need it, for example, when you are sick, moving, or need a loan?	1	2	3
B. Is this someone who will listen to you when you are feeling down?	1	2	3
C. Is this someone you can be with when you want to have fun and enjoy yourself?	1	2	3
D. Is this someone who tells you about good things to know about, such as new places to go, or where you can get help when you need it?	1	2	3

Person 3.

Relationship to you _____

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Some of the Time</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>
A. Is this someone who gives you help when you need it, for example, when you are sick, moving, or need a loan?	1	2	3
B. Is this someone who will listen to you when you are feeling down?	1	2	3
C. Is this someone you can be with when you want to have fun and enjoy yourself?	1	2	3
D. Is this someone who tells you about good things to know about, such as new places to go, or where you can get help when you need it?	1	2	3

Person 4.

Relationship to you _____

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Some of the Time</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>
A. Is this someone who gives you help when you need it, for example, when you are sick, moving, or need a loan?	1	2	3
B. Is this someone who will listen to you when you are feeling down?	1	2	3
C. Is this someone you can be with when you want to have fun and enjoy yourself?	1	2	3
D. Is this someone who tells you about good things to know about, such as new places to go, or where you can get help when you need it?	1	2	3

Person 5.

Relationship to you _____

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Some of the Time</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>
A. Is this someone who gives you help when you need it, for example, when you are sick, moving, or need a loan?	1	2	3
B. Is this someone who will listen to you when you are feeling down?	1	2	3
C. Is this someone you can be with when you want to have fun and enjoy yourself?	1	2	3
D. Is this someone who tells you about good things to know about, such as new places to go, or where you can get help when you need it?	1	2	3

Person 6.

Relationship to you _____

	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Some of the Time</u>	<u>Almost Always</u>
A. Is this someone who gives you help when you need it, for example, when you are sick, moving, or need a loan?	1	2	3
B. Is this someone who will listen to you when you are feeling down?	1	2	3
C. Is this someone you can be with when you want to have fun and enjoy yourself?	1	2	3
D. Is this someone who tells you about good things to know about, such as new places to go, or where you can get help when you need it?	1	2	3

Your contribution to this research project is very greatly appreciated.
Thank you for your time and effort.

Please return the form completed by you and the form completed by your spouse in the enclosed postage-paid return envelope which is addressed to:

Bonnie J. Harris
9912 Brookside Avenue, South
Bloomington, MN 55431